



LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

TLS

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VACANT APPOINTMENTS

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WEST SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL COUNTY LIBRARIAN

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WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY LIBRARY SENIOR ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

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ROYAL SOCIETY OF ARTS LIBRARIAN

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CORPORATION OF GLASGOW CENTRAL LIBRARY

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL ASSISTANT ARCHIVIST

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UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO LIBRARIAN

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It is easy nowadays, with the wisdom
of hindsight, to see the Cold War as
a gigantic misunderstanding. Certainly
its intensity was aggravated by
thinking in stereotypes, such as western
imperialist aggression and the
international communist conspiracy.
Today, a sincere attempt is being
made, at least by western historians,
to see through these stereotypes and
to find more rational explanations of
the roots of conflict. It would be
constraining to think that similar
attempts are being made on the
Soviet side, though there is not much
evidence of it in published work. The
result is somewhat unbalanced; western
historians are busy telling their
readers that the Soviet leaders were
not such villains after all, and a good
deal of the blame lay on western
leaders; but in the absence of any
corresponding re-assessment on the
other side, communist sympathizers
are in the happy position of being
able to say: "There—we told you
so!"

The new-fangled view of the
Cold War may therefore be just as
misleading as the old-fashioned one.
Professor Kolko's monumental
work, though in many respects
admirable, does not entirely escape
this criticism. He has not attempted
a history of the Cold War but only
an exhaustive study of its origins:
in fact, more than 600 pages devoted
to the two years between mid-1943
and the defeat of Japan in August,
1945. Within those twenty-five
months, virtually nothing of any sig-
nificance has escaped him. But a
strictly self-imposed discipline pre-
cludes him from paying any attention
to anything that happened outside
his chosen limits. The reader who
realizes that the Cold War actually
fell like a bomb on the world at the
end of the war, and that it was
entirely unexpected, especially when he
sees the glowing colours in which
Professor Kolko depicts some of the
characters who later appeared in
quite a different light. There are both
minor and major examples of this
distorting effect. The United States
Treasury official Harry Dexter
White plays an extremely significant
and sympathetic role in Professor
Kolko's account; but there is not a
word about his subsequent death
under suspicion of having betrayed
his country. A more serious case
still is the presentation of Stalin, who
appears to Professor Kolko as a well-
meaning, benign, slightly puzzled
conservative, continually frustrated
by American pig-headedness.

The word "conservative" is one
of the commonest and most strangely
applied in Professor Kolko's vocabu-
lary. Broadly speaking, it is a
term of abuse usually with a capital
letter when applied or misapplied to
British or American figures, such as
"Lord Robert Vansittart, the Con-
servative, bitterly anti-Russian politi-
cal leader". (Consistently with his
policy of ignoring facts before the
beginning of his story, Professor
Kolko does not mention that Vansittart
was a civil servant and former
Permanent Under-Secretary of the
Foreign Office.) On the other hand,
the same epithet is used with approval
over Europe. The central theme of
The Politics of War is that through-
out the last two years of the Second
World War Stalin and the commu-
nist leaders of the European resis-
tance movements were trying not to
subvert but to preserve the *status quo*
throughout Europe, including
the eastern as well as the western
countries. Such pressure as there
was for revolutionary change came
not from the communists but from
the non-communist radicals and the
ordinary people. It was facilitated
by British and American errors of
judgment, but hampered and dis-
couraged by Stalin.

The thesis is at first sight a bizarre
one. It says much for Professor
Kolko's skill and thoroughness that
it cannot be dismissed out of hand.
In a few countries where communism
was not strong, such as Rumania, it
has a certain plausibility. In others,

such as Yugoslavia, where national-
ism was stronger than ideology, it is
also understandable that Stalin did
not want to see an independent Com-
munist Party in absolute power. The
same could be true of France and
Italy, where Stalin probably knew
enough about the French and Italian
to doubt whether he could have con-
trolled revolutionary events. Further-
more, it is certain that Stalin did not
favour or help the communist revolu-
tion in China; and perhaps he in-
stinctively foresaw trouble from such
a nationalist as Ho Chi Minh. Never-
theless as a general thesis there are
serious flaws in Professor Kolko's
reconstruction. Poland and Czechoslovakia are obvious cases in point:
it is simply not acceptable to argue
that their fate was determined solely
by American follies, frustrating
Stalin's natural good will. An even
more extreme perversion colours
Professor Kolko's account of what
he calls "the Greek passion".

He writes indeed with passion
about the Greeks, but both judgment
and accuracy desert him. Such
errors as dating the Italian invasion
of Greece to 1941 or speaking of
Greece's "disputed" southern
border, though trivial, are so
numerous as to shake confidence.
Others are plainly tendentious: for
example, the statement that King
George II "had married to the lan-
guage". It is also difficult to ignore
Professor Kolko's intemperate lan-
guage. "In Greece the British used
the club and knout to stop the Left",
"the British agreed to rigged elec-
tions", and so on. He classes to-
gether "monarchists, pro-Nazis and
Anglophiles", and even accuses the
British of forming the Security
Battalions, which were in fact formed
by the Germans to fight the Greek
resistance. Of the atrocities
committed by a number of
communist leaders at the end of the
occupation, Professor Kolko has
only a single sentence: "The [posi-
tion] regime now judged ELAS ex-
ecutions of collaborators as murder." Such
undisguised prejudice can per-
manently discolour the history of
events, which would be fallacious even
if Professor Kolko had the facts
right. When he asserts that the British
would support the E.A.M., which was
synonymous with communism in
Foreign Office parlance, the self-
contradiction is manifest. Anyone
who was so foolish as to think
that he "knew" Greece would sup-
port E.A.M. could not conceivably
at the same time have identified
E.A.M. with communism.

To demolish Professor Kolko's re-
construction of events in Greece from
item would be a waste of energy,
though a very simple task, were it
not that he resists to great a weight of
argument himself on this case. It is
in his thesis that the commu-
nists in Europe did not want revolu-
tionary change in 1944-45, but be-
lieved, because the British and Ameri-
cans, particularly the latter, persisted
in treating them as revolutionaries,
this paradox everywhere: in Poland,
Czechoslovakia, Germany, Hungary,
Bulgaria, China. The aims of com-
munist, he finds, were modest and
conservative; there was no interna-
tional conspiracy; Stalin's policies
were pragmatic and pluralist, so the
occurrence and did not attempt to im-
pose uniform policies everywhere;
the "Soviet orbit" did not exist,
except as "a decade-old fear in the
West". Whether Professor Kolko is
to have fully made out this contro-
versial argument will largely depend
on the preconceived attitudes of his
readers.

There is another side to his thesis,
however, which is more likely to
be acceptable and does not depend
on his interpretation of communist
motives. His analysis of Anglo-
American relations during the war
is impressive and disquieting. He
sees the two major allies as more
closely bound together in trust and
sympathy than either of them

with the Soviet Union, he
relationship, in Professor
view, was no better than
Germany and Italy, and
of Roosevelt and the
of Roosevelt and Churchill
cooled the reality more
those of Hitler and
The objects of American
were twofold: to ensure
domination of the United
postwar organization, and
mobilizing double Latin
into membership, and to
a world-wide economic sys-
on free trade without
American protectionism
is worked out with
agency. The picture of the
States Treasury calculating
maximum and minimum
which the British gold re-
serves must be limited to
pillage of Lease-Lend pro-
gram that cannot be up-
regret on either side of the
Unfortunately it cannot be
without conviction either.

Professor Kolko is at his
an economic historian, ac-
chapters are the best in the
He goes far to rehabilitate
of Henry Morgenthau, the
much-maligned Secretary of
Treasury, and shows that
most of the criticisms of
simply failed to understand
principles on which it was
also puns the Anglo-Ameri-
perspective, showing how the
ing Area, which was virtu-
by the Second World War
doomed in the end to be
casualties. One of the
of Professor Kolko is
that he never loses sight of
American rivalries in de-
forced alliance against the
Union. Another is the stress
on the skill of Stalin in using
American gambits as pre-
his own tactics: for instance
the structure of Allied War
Government in Italy, from
Russians were almost ex-
cluded, in order to exclude the
Americans from the West
east European countries.
examples of Stalin's manipu-
lation of western errors were
the division of Germany, in-
stitutions for the Russians to
war against Japan and in the
fulfilment of the U.N. organ-
ization.

To sum up, Professor Kolko's
the last two years of the war
angular struggle on unequal
in which the lesser powers
no better than pawns. Of the
major powers, the Americans
greatest strength, and a more
most capable of rising to meet
but their advantages were
the vanity and stupidity of
level. The Soviet Union had
equal strength, though
greater loves to make up
leader who was beyond and
tunist but also cautious and
five by temperament. The
had the least strength but the
est and most unscrupulous
far as the Americans are con-
Professor Kolko's case is well
out, though he is too much
to deny them the benefit of the
His verdicts on Churchill and
are prejudiced against the
for the other hand, not
accordance with the evidence
his notes. The overall argu-
it leaves too many reservations
called conclusive.

Lawrence S. Winters, *Winning
against War* (339pp. Collins
University Press. £4.10). It is
attempt at a proper history of
American peace movements from
to 1960. After an excellent
chapter summarizing anti-war
factors between the two world
fessor Winters describes the
to American participation in
Second World War, and
against the atomic bomb in
of the pacifist movement in
1950s, and the growth of
to the hydrogen bomb. He
logue mentions the role of
violence during the

SAYS AND HUMOUR

From down under

McGREGOR: *People Politics*.
Pp. 221pp. Sydney: Ure
£4.50.

his shortish paperback, compiled
of occasional pieces, Craig
McGregor gives so much evidence
of gifts and good qualities, as to
the reader feel quite nervous
for his future. To begin with,
a very good descriptive report
brief sketch of a hoisting New-
day in Sydney is almost
done. He writes excellent
and interviews, covering a
wide variety of characters from
the Sydney to the Australian
politician James Ford
He throws in one quite good
and a very good short story. He
an exceptionally level-headed
the one hand of established
of course, and his inference
related to it, and on the
of the satirists, architects and
singers whose opposition to
disorder ultimately to sheer mis-
or a too narrow concep-
on their own concerns and
In short he can write,
a combination. His book
is only a pleasure to read but
possibly a landmark in a not-
ed.

Mr. McGregor differs from
the really critical writers in
his reluctance to renege the first
principles of his criticism. He
rightly he pillories Mr. Humphries
for the inhumanity of his freakish
compilation *Barney*, which he seems
to regard as being of a piece with his
arrogant, if steadily accurate, render-
ings of suburban mores. In Mr. Ash-
bolt's case he accepts his reasoned
judgment of society while rejecting
his opinion of its members. With the
Oz triumvirate, of Walsh, Richard
Neville and Martin Sharp, he sus-
pects the first of tending rightwards,
accuses the second of not really
knowing what he thinks, and mean-
while has his book amusingly illu-

his attitude is not all that exceptional,
for writers in a number of countries
have seen the pop element in the
various arts as a positive force and
set out to distinguish between bad
popular art and good, which in Mr.
McGregor's case means welcoming
the Beatles while rejecting the "crude
racism and suspect relationship"
of Hamman and Robin. A suburbanite
himself, however, he is not willing
to assume that the supposedly com-
mon man mowing his lawn of a Sun-
day is in any deep sense inferior to
the uncommon intellectual. For
"what really counts in people, and
what I certainly admire, is neither
intellectually nor sophisticated but
goodness", while "the closer you
look at the lives of ordinary people
the more rewarding and subtle they
become".

This is where this writer parts com-
pany with such talented compatriots
as Barry Humphries, Allan Ashbolt,
Ian Turner, the editors of Oz, and
even Patrick White, to whose various
views of modern Australia he gives
some individual attention. Quite
rightly he pillories Mr. Humphries
for the inhumanity of his freakish
compilation *Barney*, which he seems
to regard as being of a piece with his
arrogant, if steadily accurate, render-
ings of suburban mores. In Mr. Ash-
bolt's case he accepts his reasoned
judgment of society while rejecting
his opinion of its members. With the
Oz triumvirate, of Walsh, Richard
Neville and Martin Sharp, he sus-
pects the first of tending rightwards,
accuses the second of not really
knowing what he thinks, and mean-
while has his book amusingly illu-

Quartered

BARRY HUMPHRIES: *The Wonderful
World of Barry McKenzie*. Drawings
by Nicholas Garland. Unnumbered
pages. Macdonald. 8s. 6d.

RALPH STEADMAN: *Still Life with
Raspberries*. Unnumbered pages.
Rapp and Whiting. £3.3s.

RONALD SEARLE: *Filles de Ham-
bourg*. Unnumbered pages. Paris:
Pauvert. 12fr.

The appeal of Barry Humphries's
Barry McKenzie, that pillar (or
apple) of *Private Eye*, is based on
three assets as simple and solid as
his own bulging chin. If you like them
you like the strip of which he is the
improbable hero, and its rather mod-
erate drawing, erratic continuity and
sometimes almost illegible repro-
duction drop into place alongside the
editors' unfortunate legal and distri-
bution problems as minor obstacles
to the enjoyment, one way and the
other, of a good deal of genuine in-
spiration. Because Barrington Brad-
nong Bing McKenzie is a crude and
naive Australian of the most prepu-
terous kind, he enjoys a license such
as we probably would not allow to
an Indian or a Canadian Simplizius-
mus, and certainly not to a South
African or Rhodesian (let alone a
non-foreigner, to trample him-footed
not only over our highly resilient
language, but across our most rigid
social distinctions and our still strict
modesty where certain bodily func-
tions and mishaps are concerned. The
ensuing wonderful world of shells
and Tosters and strangled darters and
pointed perics is given a certain
subtlety by the clash between the two
Barrys: the frightful, clodhopping
McKenzie and the highbrow Hum-
phries, his creator. For it is clearly
the author's purpose not only to sur-
pass all the wildest British ideas about
antipodean roughnecks but also to
make his mine with light complicity
feed suitably embarrassed.

"The boys don't like it plain and
simple." This is one of Barry's ver-
dicts on the British, usually expressed
to some fellow-Australian and in a
sexual context. To our face he says
"You're always crying sinking fish
in your own back yard." Both re-
marks are, alas, true, and Ralph
Steadman's drawings, which were
likewise done very largely for *Private*

Eye, would be better if they were a
little less fussy and less forcedly
examined with distaste for what he
calls "This Septic Isle". At his best
Steadman is a draughtsman of in-
ternational class, occasionally recalling
Steinberg and André François, but
using elements of collage, pop-art
imagery and parody—there is an
excellent Francis Bacon in his book,
as well as a witty page on the
subject of fake and real
Picasso in a manner all his own.
It is only a pity that he sometimes
seems to strain for his effects—too
much action, too many incidents,
too much flesh-creeching distortion
of limbs and repellent disintegrated
of features—wearing also too
ineffectively between the angular
tor Buffet) and globular-gelatinous
(or Searle) approach. Much the
same could have been said of the
early Steinberg, perhaps, which
implies that if only Steadman can win
some of the recognition given to
less gifted cartoonists he ought to
be able to find his own individual
feet. *Still Life with Raspberries* is too
grey, in its half-tone reproduction,
to be wholly fair, but its publication
is a welcome first step.

Ronald Searle's pen drawings of
Hamburg strippers and tars are not
exactly plain and simple either, but
they represent a more classic tradi-
tion of draughtsmanship in which
precise observation is the first
thing and the comments are art-
fully sidelong ones, quietly
achieved by means of selec-
tion and emphasis: faces in the
audience, the odd detail of architec-
ture or inscription. Needless to say,
Searle is in style as well as in matter.
These girls pose singly or together,
with whips, feather boas, elaborate
suspender-belts and boots, or else
with nothing at all, but always wear-
ing pilled-up bairds and big Bardot
mouths; others waiting in trousers
or light dresses for pickups look
bored or sulky. No Through Road
for Joveilles. To our face he says
"The drawings, however, are beauti-
ful, made with exactly the right mix-
ture of involvement and detached
criticism."

THAMES AND HUDSON

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

God's light on a wilderness

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Jacob, the Scourge of Grammar, mark with awe,
Nor less revere him, Blunderbuss of Law
—Mr. Jones observes:
The division of the second line, which
forces an awkward pause in the middle
of the third foot, is as ungainly as the
heavy collocation of consonants in
the middle of the first line and in the
second half of the last. The sound
and movement characterize the victim
—heavy, ugly, clumsy.
But is there any awkwardness in

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eighteenth-century culture
ations. As for having se
course with a tulip, cl
good; but on this occasi
Mr. Jones is, not in agree
he cites the same passage
ments on "the deriv
inal quality of the name
the soul is bound in the
corpse of the battle
seems to be a moral
light is free, but critical
suddenly becomes licence.

Prince

as well as gratification at home. Many of these there are, from Māori to Worm's Head, from St. David to the Honduu. The Snowdon section has had the benefit of a renowned re-trembling by Mr. Richard Lister, and many a weary leg will yet reap blessings on his feet.

Most of the information is im-



The same essay tells how he came to suspect that there was an element of power-seeking mixed in with socialist idealism, how he came to accept original sin, how he became a Christian and a nationalist. Wales now becomes for him the image of the human society fighting the pressures of a dehumanizing industrial and capitalist structure, identified with the British Empire, and he has had the British (and since I was a lad of 17—but always a human) society existing in the light of God. His theology was perhaps, more than anything else, that he did not become a Roman Catholic, as many of the ablest men of his generation did in Wales, and in fact ended his life as he had begun it, with the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists. Dr. Pone, as he once said, had too much

They have planted the saplings from the third exodus in the lands of Egypt-Cair and fields of Tur-bach Near Khrydycmeran.

— but also the element that assails the triumph of a nation over its divisions:

The Span of the Cross is much wider than their Puritanism and their Socialism.

And there is a place for the fist of K Marx in his Church.

Fatruce and Faru walk together His exodus from the pit.

The humanity of the godling of the count.

Tate and Tysil. Cnoam and Wroth earth and heaven.

Land of the

WAST ROSSITER, (Editor) : Wales
300pp. Ernest Benn. £2 10s.

is the fifth edition of the "Blue
side" to Wales and, appropriately
ough, it appears in Investiture
at. Most of the revision has been
ried out by Mr. Harold Carler o
Derbyshire.

Prince

as well as gratification at home. Many of these there are, from Māori to Worm's Head, from St. David to the Honduu. The Snowdon section has had the benefit of a renowned re-trembling by Mr. Richard Lister, and many a weary leg will yet reap blessings on his feet.

Most of the information is im-

Circle the pillars of smoke in the sky
 Colouring the curve of grey

now becomes to him the merge of the human society fighting the pressures of a dehumanizing industrial and capitalist structure, identified with the British Empire—"I have hated the British lezebel since I was a lad of 17"—but always a human society existing in the light of God. His theology was perhaps more Thomist than anything else, but he did not become a Roman Catholic, as many of the ablest men of his generation did in Wales, and in fact ended his life as he had begun it, with the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists. Pione, as he was once said, had too much

The Guide proper consists of three parts, devoted to North, Central, and South Wales. The towns and industrial works get a fair showing, and the works of man as ostles, cathedrals, and churches a fairer; but what should be called "the Works of God" get the fairest showing of all. Even a patriotic and

ably up to date. The radio-carbon dating of the "Red Lady of Pavane" (a human) is of 1983. On the other hand counts of cricket left in the dirt Arns Park for Sophia Gardens are apparently undetected, that same year. Under Dodelgaur's is disclosed, willing to be told to pronounce the name... Dodelgaur's. True, there is a travelling little poem which rhymes the town with "bedly" but under the new orthography even this has been rounded out to "bellau". The revised version and new format is an excellent book for the pocket knapsack, or dash-board, and the person.

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INGWOOD

especially of his philosophies
to traditional theories. (Am
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Commentary

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Nor was he ever invited to produce his own cure for the alleged shortness of what he had written. Indeed, he could not agree that the script was anything like as short as the director maintained. Mr. Ashmore was quoted in *The Guardian* as saying that, with intervals, *The Spoils* would have lasted only sixty-five minutes. Professor Myers had himself timed his script at ninety minutes. It contains fifty-nine quarto pages of typescript, including the stage directions, which are not extensive. Few pages of it could be decently spoken in under a minute and a quarter, which makes Professor Myers's own timing plausible enough. Since *The Spoils*, as performed, lasted 140 minutes, Mr. Ashmore should, in theory, have added seventy-five minutes of additional dialogue. The prompt copy of the play shows that he did indeed add a great deal, but he also cut out some of what Professor Myers had written, so any definitive comparison of the two scripts would be very difficult. But if a remarkable event when the director of a play stretches a text, by his own calculations, to double its original length, all the more so when he has started out by saying that the script was "excellent".

It cannot have happened very often before in the theatre that an author has lost possession of his play as comprehensively as Professor Myers did, without any chance to intervene until four days before the first dress rehearsal. He was, of course, mis-

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At a meeting of the education committee of the British Association held on Tuesday, Dr. E. Ghallouni, of the University of London, mounted a fierce attack on the scientific theories of the Naam League. Dr. Lewis replied. Ghallouni admitted to what teachers can do, but he denied the verbal skills of the pupils, with his "deep-dive" into the postulation of a universal language is not a set of titles of nobility but an open system of evaluation in part because of its practical value. He encouraged teachers to instill a measure of competency into their charges just because a profound cynicism doubts the effects of an on a child's acquisition of language. Ghallouni still wonders whether Dr. Lewis's theory has anything to do with his own. He himself once tutored Thomas.

The Icelandic microcosm



and demonstrates with masterly clarity that they are alive even in that strunge environment. They stand out with indignation. Dickens in the author's indignation. Dickens in his genuine indignation of all the savage inhumanity which they practise under the mask of charity, progress or good government. Certainly no one can read *World Light* without coming away with a greatly sharpened realization of the blindness of the mask of commercially motivated benevolence, or *The Fish Can Sing* without a deeper feeling for the debasement of art at the hands of shrillness and commercial exploiters. The glamour of these unhealthy things is not missed, and the child's eye view scenes Carlar Hólm in the great artist which Gúðmunds's publicity men make him out to be, and De La Vigne and Gúðmunds the liberal and disinterested patron of the arts, until the child begins to look at the world with the discerning eyes of his unassuming but clairvoyant grandparents, whereupon the great singer dissolves into a posturing vagabond and the great patron into a sordid purveyor of glumicks to advertise his shop. And in the same way Pétur Pálsson, manager and disposer of all things good in the remote fishing-village of Svínshvinn, comes out in his true colours as an unscrupulous commercial bandit and Björn & Leir-mann in *Paradise Reclaimed*, so kind to his troubled neighbour, as a scruffy little sadist with a liking for young girls. Yet Björn & Leir-mann is also redeemed by his other virtues. His tastes are a strong man whose tastes are the aristocracy of wrestling with the harsh realities of the land and sea for his livelihood, and who, in opposition to the mean-spirited Pétur or Gvendur, is a man who jakes his enjoyments on an open and healthy way unobscured by the inhibitions of a middle-class urban morality.

This, then, is the second main theme in Laxness's work. However much the vice that dominates a character disgusts him, and his indignation is terrible when unleashed to full force, as in his description of the *fin de siècle* bullies, the people, but are seen to be loaded. All these qualities are clear enough in the available English versions of Laxness's novels. Unfortunately, what cannot be conveyed, even in the most accurate of them, is the thing which stands out most clearly in his country-

It would be arrogant even to hope that the full magnificence of the original has survived this sea change into English; there are subtleties, of cadence in the style, there is a wealth of vocabulary that would baffle Roger himself, there is a living, speaking language rooted in the culture of the people that no alien language can properly reproduce.

After wrestling for twenty years with *Ismdshukhka*, where this wealth is seen in its most profuse and exasperating, the present reviewer endorses this statement in the most forcible manner. For it is not that Laxness cannot be translated in the old-fashioned, Whordoor Street sense of the word, it is that such translation provides only a worse parody of the original than even Bohn's hacks contrived to produce of the Greek and Latin classics, and to render him intelligible to the English reader much must be lost.

The reason for this difficulty is that Laxness was rebelling against a linguistic convention under which Icelandic prose fiction was becoming as petrified as modern "literary" Russian. The novelists who preceded him in the mainstream of Icelandic letters had evolved a consciously pure "literary" style, originally in rebellion against the half-Danicized "Civil Service style" which had become an abomination in the eyes of the leaders of the Nationalist movement of the early nineteenth century, but which had in turn become so anemically free from Danielssons, dialectal words or peculiarities of idiom that when any of Laxness's immediate predecessors let one of their slips into their text the result was a shock to the reader similar to the one received on the hearing of a swearword from a B.L.T. news-announcer in the reign of Lord Reith. There is little doubt that these latest men were acting with the best of intentions, as a means of restoring the purity of the tongue as they imagined it had been, but in doing so they were being unwittingly false to their own foundations, as may be seen by the fact that one of the principal strengths of Jón Thoroddsen's novels is the awareness of his ear, and his delight in the comical malformations of language which are produced by the immoderate and the would-be-educated and which form the material with which he builds up such oddities as *Grón á Leit* in *Boy and Girl*.

In this respect Laxness has gone back to the source - for his inspiration, but he has gone much farther, for Thoroddsen kept those things to the comic members of his cast, while Laxness refuses to employ such a self-dwinding ordinance, and he used this wider linguistic frame as a means of expanding Thoroddsen's comparatively narrow emotional range of elaborating and sophisticating his primitive linguistic apparatus. For this purpose he used a second source of inspiration for him in the work of Benedikt Gröndal (1826-1907) a brilliant writer of immense fantasy in whose two magnificent saga-parodies, *Sagan of Helgafellsmorastu* and *Þorðar saga Gehrundsdóttur*, the old tradition of prose story-telling closed with a riotous bang while at the same time they were to be the heralds of a new form that did not come into serious literary use for nearly half a century, for in them are the roots of Laxness's manner of conducting dialogue between his characters.

Once again, however, the emotional charge Laxness uses is far wider than that of his original, as well as more eclectic, in the strict literary sense of the word, for where Grönvald was content to look for the entertainment value alone, Laxness uses the quality of incongruity for numerous other ends, and directs his vast wealth of words and phrases with a skill that was never before seen in the language. He has surpassed the others who have attempted to quarry from this particular source in order to escape the tirade of the Ministry of Education supported by the *tertiary party*, as dead as the minds of the civil servants who have imposed it on the schools.

Others, it is true, have succeeded in producing a work which provided for a reader for a while, but it has run out.

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